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ORD-0245-95

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology

FROM:   
Director of Research and Development, DS&T

SUBJECT: Star Gate - Program Status and Proposed New Direction

1. In late January, the Executive Director approved our recommended approach to the Congressionally Directed Action that transfers the "Star Gate" program to CIA (attachment A). Our approach was later formally transmitted to Congress and briefed to Richard D'Amato of the SAC staff on 27 March 1995 (attachment B). This approach included asking the National Research Council to conduct a blue ribbon panel review and evaluation of the Star Gate program, using experts that had participated in a similar review for the US Army several years ago.

2. We proceeded to contact the NRC and officially transferred funds to the Army Research Institute to have them be the executive agent for this review. In parallel with this, we also have been working closely with DIA and their support contractor to identify all relevant documents pertaining to Star Gate and have made plans to declassify all but the most sensitive aspects of the program.

3. Last week we received from NRC their letter, dated 5 May 1995, in which NRC declines to do the evaluation, citing their 1988 report (attachment C). In fact, they quote from their previous report on this

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subject further stating that they hope their recent report will be helpful in guiding our assessment of remote viewing studies:

"In summary, after approximately 15 years of claims and sometimes bitter controversy, the literature on remote viewing has managed to produce only one possibly successful experiment that is not seriously flawed in its methodology - and that one experiment provides only marginal evidence for the existence of ESP. By both scientific and parapsychological standards, then, the case for remote viewing is not just very weak, but virtually nonexistent. It seems that the preeminent position that remote viewing occupies in the minds of many proponents results from the highly exaggerated claims made for the early experiments, as well as the subjectively compelling, but illusory, correspondences that experimenters and participants find between components of the descriptions and the target sites."

4. We were subsequently referred by our contacts at NRC to Dr. David Goslin, President of American Institutes of Research (AIR), a highly respected firm dealing with behavioral science issues. AIR could quickly assemble a panel that includes some of the original NRC study contributors. We have talked to AIR and believe they could indeed do the review and evaluation in less time and for fewer dollars than the NRC itself, and AIR is currently preparing a preliminary proposal.

5. However, in view of the strong position taken by the NRC that the "case for remote viewing is not just very weak, but nonexistent", I want to propose at this point that we strongly consider the option of going back to Congress with the recommendation not to accept the Star Gate program from DIA. Even if we do proceed with a new review by AIR, there exists a very strong possibility that AIR will merely reach the same conclusion firmly held by the NRC. Furthermore, as you may recall, neither the DO nor the DI were at all interested in having this program reside in their directorates, and we deferred any decision regarding

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what to do with the operational people currently at DIA until after we had completed the blue ribbon panel assessment regarding the value of the program to CIA and the Intelligence Community.

6. Regardless, we are prepared to proceed with a blue ribbon panel review and evaluation as originally proposed but we would be contracting with AIR instead of NRC. The alternative plan, however, which I recommend you raise at the EXDIR level, is to take the advice of the NRC and conclude without further review that the Star Gate program is not likely to be of value to CIA. Despite the interest of various members of the SSCI and SAC, I recommend we adopt this alternative plan and ask Congress to agree that the program should NOT be transferred to CIA.



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Attachments:

- A. Lotus Note Memo to EXDIR  
(January 1995)
- B. CIA Response to Congressionally  
Directed Action, 28 March 1995
- C. Ltr frm NRC dtd 5 May 1995